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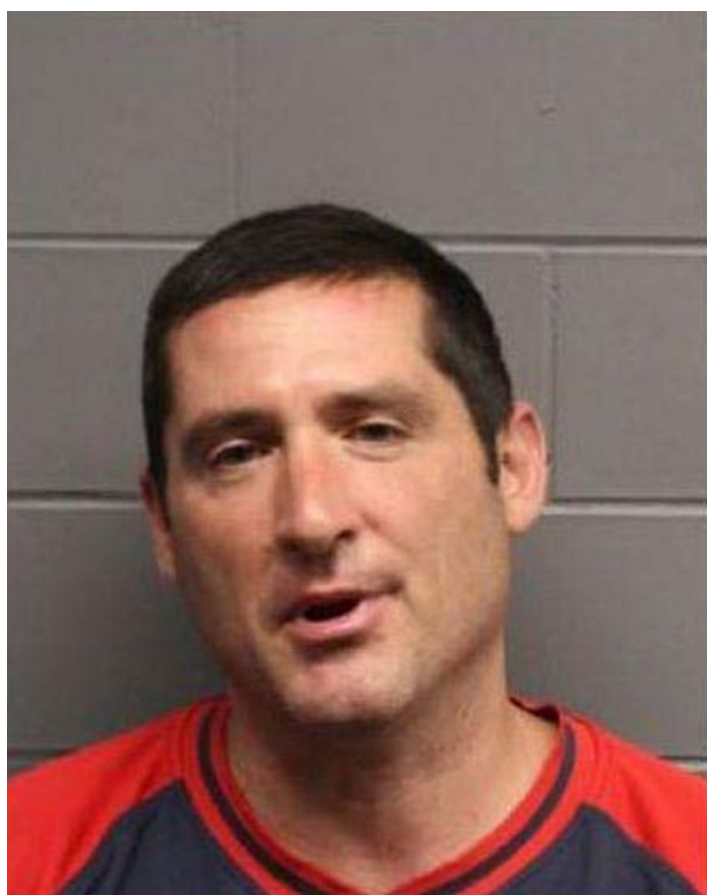
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ADRIAN WALKER

'Passionate' Trump fans behind homeless man's beating?

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SUFFOLK COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Scott Leader (left) and Steve Leader (right).



By [Adrian Walker](#) | GLOBE COLUMNIST AUGUST 21, 2015

The anti-immigrant sentiments at the heart of Donald Trump's presidential campaign hit home for Boston early Wednesday, and the leading GOP candidate wasn't nearly as

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contrite about it as ^{Comments}he should have been.

According to police, a 58-year-old Mexican immigrant sleeping outside the JFK/UMass MBTA station was attacked by two South Boston brothers who were on their way home from a Red Sox game. State Police say Steven and Scott Leader both urinated on the man and beat him with a metal pole.

After they were arrested, one of them admiringly quoted his political hero. "Donald Trump was right; all these illegals need to be deported," Scott Leader said.

Obviously, Trump isn't personally responsible for the alleged behavior of two men in another state. But his reaction to hearing of the alleged beating of a Hispanic man was hardly worthy of a candidate for the Oval Office.



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"It would be a shame. . . . I will say that people who are following me are very passionate. They love this country and they want this country to be great again. They are passionate."

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South Boston brothers allegedly beat homeless man

One of the South Boston brothers accused of beating and urinating on the victim said he was inspired in part by Donald Trump.

Mexico condemns beating of citizen

Got that? They're passionate. But allegedly urinating on a homeless, sleeping man and breaking his ribs has nothing to do with making America great again. Quite the opposite, actually.

Nor would "passion" excuse such heinous behavior. But such distinctions might be too nuanced for the hard-charging Trump campaign.

In post-arrest interviews with the police, one of the men also whined that he and his brother were arrested because they are white, while immigrants are never arrested. In that, they echoed the twisted sense of victimization one hears from immigrant-bashers everywhere. Foreigners are taking over our country. They get to break the law. We're victims. Trump should be embarrassed to be the hero of such people, but his has been a shame-free campaign.

As it happens, it is the Leader brothers who may have been skirting the law. When

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McCormack housing development. Their name does not appear on any lease, but they were apparently living with their mother, a tenant there who hadn't disclosed their residence.

Boston Housing Authority administrator Bill McGonagle said Thursday the agency will begin proceedings to evict their mother — and, by extension, her sons — from public housing.



That decisive action is commendable. But it won't do much to stem the tide of anti-immigrant feeling that is being legitimized in the course of this hideous presidential campaign. Trump entered the race pledging to purge the country of Mexican criminals and rapists, and his rhetoric has gotten no less strident since then. Among other ideas, he has called for doing away with citizenship as a birthright, which he says will make it easier to deport families. He wants to build a fence at the US-Mexico border, though he has waffled on his initial declaration that he would somehow force Mexico to pay for it.

Much of this is plainly ridiculous, but he has struck a chord with people looking for someone to give voice to their rage and hate. Resentment has a way of finding an audience.

"The words that people use on the campaign trail, on the floors of Congress, on the nightly news, and in their living rooms have consequences," said Robert Trestan of the Anti-Defamation League. "The climate of bias and hostility against immigrants that has emerged in recent weeks is unproductive for the immigration debate and can pave the way for people to act on bigotry and prejudice."

Trump isn't likely to become president, but that doesn't make his brand of politics any less disgraceful. He doesn't seem to care much, but far from the spotlight Trump finds so addictive, some of his passionate supporters seem emboldened to act on long-simmering

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